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PATENT
Attorney Docket No. 24200-002 CON
(previously KT-001AX)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Lowman
5-23-03

In re application : James D. Schlick et al.
Application No. : 09/493,783
Filed : January 28, 2000
For : METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROBLEM
SOLVING, DECISION MAKING AND STORING,
ANALYZING AND RETRIEVING ENTERPRISEWIDE
KNOWLEDGE AND CONCLUSIVE DATA
Examiner: Susanna M. Meinecke Diaz
Group Art Unit: 3623

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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GROUP 3600

Sir:

In response to the Office Action mailed March 14, 2003, the response period of which is extended to May 14, 2003 by the accompanying request for extension, Applicants submit the following remarks and respectfully request allowance of the application. Claims 1-36, 40, 41, 43-49, 52-90, 94, 95, 97-103, and 106-111 are currently pending.

These remarks respond to the issues raised in the March 14, 2003 Office Action in the order the issues were raised in that Office Action.

The March 14, 2003 Office Action stated the following (in relevant part):

The previous Examiner of record requested information describing Applicant's APEX II and GENCO II along with "other materials relevant to this line of inquiry." The previous Examiner of record also requested clarification regarding whether or not APEX II or GENCO II are computer-implemented....

Furthermore, the Examiner has come across a reference...which discusses various problem-solving and decision-making packages, including "Kepner Tregoe Inc.'s Decision Aid II..." The previous Examiner's request for "other materials relevant to this line of inquiry" is deemed to incorporate a request for any software, computer-implemented programs, etc. incorporating any or all of the subject matter not only recited in the claims, but also disclosed in the Applicant's specification...Furthermore, if such software or any other software related to the claimed invention exists, Applicant is requested to point out how the software (as it existed prior to Applicant's earliest priority date) differs from the claimed invention.

In response to the March 14, 2003 Office Action, the Applicants provide the materials listed in Appendix A in an information disclosure statement filed herewith. The above-referenced materials are also listed on PTO form 1449 filed herewith.

Applicants reserve their right to object to the scope of the Examiner's request under 37 CFR 1.105. However, in an effort to expedite prosecution of this application and in response to the March 14, 2003 Office Action's apparent request for clarification of whether a computer-implemented version of either APEX II or GENCO II exists, the Applicants provide the following responses. Prior to the development of ethink, a product related to the present invention, no computer-implemented version of either APEX II or GENCO II existed. Decision Aid II and Trouble Shooter II, listed in Appendix A mentioned above, were support tools for use by a user who had been trained using APEX II or GENCO II materials.

With respect to the claimed invention and the software listed in Appendix A, as defined by claim 1, the claimed invention provides a method of gathering, processing, storing, and displaying information concerning a complex business situation. The method includes: providing a graphical user interface for entering data concerning said complex business situation; refining the data in a predetermined, stepwise manner through user interaction with the graphical user interface; generating, through the stepwise manner and the graphical user interface, a list of effective actions for addressing the complex business situation; and storing the data in an indexed and normalized form in a knowledge base adapted for structured query and retrieval in performing the steps of refining and generating, the knowledge base enabling selection of an in process analysis for modification by a user.


In contrast, the Decision Aid II software includes five sections entitled: plan analysis, clarify purpose, generate alternatives, evaluate alternatives, and make decision. The Trouble Shooter II software includes three sections entitled: describe the problem; identify the possible causes; and determine true cause. Finally, the Planning Pro software includes four sections entitled: create the plan; protect the plan; enhance the plan; and manage the plan. Thus, for example, with reference to claim 1, the Decision Aid II, Trouble Shooter II, and Planning Pro software do not store the data in an indexed and normalized form in a knowledge base adapted for structured query and retrieval in performing the steps of refining and generating, the knowledge base enabling selection of an in process analysis for modification by a user, as claimed by claim 1.

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Applicants believe that this application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request allowance of the application. If there are any questions regarding these remarks, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be due, or credit any overpayment of same, to Deposit Account No. 50-0311, Reference No. 24200-002.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: May 14, 2003

Correspondence should be addressed to customer number **30623**.



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APPENDIX A

Kepner Tregoe "Decision Aide II" User Manual.

Kepner Tregoe "Trouble Shooter II" User Manual.

Kepner Tregoe "Trouble Shooter IBM Hardware Guide".

Kepner Tregoe "Planning Pro" User Manual".

Decision Aide II software (2 disks).

Planning Pro software (3 disks).

Trouble Shooter software (1984 version) (3 disks).

Trouble Shooter software (1985 version) (1 disk).

Trouble Shooter software (1986 version) (2 disks).